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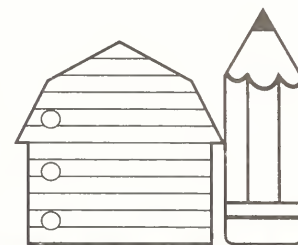


# Ag in the Classroom

AS533  
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# Notes

United States  
Department of  
Agriculture



A bi-monthly newsletter for the Agriculture in the Classroom Program. Sponsored by the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture to help students understand the important role of agriculture in the United States economy. For information, contact: Shirley Traxler, Director, Room 317-A, Administration Bldg., USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250-2200. 202/720-5727

APRIL/MAY 93  
Vol. 9; No. 3

## New Oklahoma Materials "Begin at the Beginning"

"As educators, we know the critical importance of early learning. So when the Oklahoma state AITC program was starting to develop curriculum, we decided to begin at the beginning," says Jim Rutledge, one of the state contacts for AITC in Oklahoma. The result is two large notebooks of activities especially designed for students in kindergarten through grade two.

JoDahl Theimer, the second state contact for Oklahoma, notes, "We want to get students' attention while they're young." The two notebooks include lessons that can be incorporated

into language arts, reading, mathematics, science, social studies, and visual arts curricula in the primary grades.

"Developing the materials was a real challenge," says Charles Cox, who worked on the project. "We wanted to make sure we were teaching children, but not frustrating them." As a result, he says, most lesson plans were "pretested, then retested, then piloted with teachers in classrooms."

In fact, several of the staff members who worked on the project were the parents of primary school children—many of whom became the first users of the material. "We figured our kids were pretty typical, and that if the lessons worked with them, they'd work with other children," Cox says.

The particular challenge of working with children in the primary grades, of course, is making sure that the reading level of the information matches their skills. The Oklahoma materials rely more on pictures than on words. Students are actively involved with each lesson, through

Name \_\_\_\_\_

### Face Your Feelings

How might you feel if . . . Circle and color the faces that show your feelings.

your barn cat runs away, and you can't find it.					
your prize pig wins first place at the fair					
a tornado wipes out your pecan crop for the year.					
your family is forced to sell the family farm.					
Write your own.					

**Talk about it.**

- 1 Do you have more than one feeling in each situation? Mark all the faces that show how you feel.
- 2 Do other members of your class feel just the same as you about some situation?
- 3 Think up a solution for the situations where you colored a sad face. Explain your solution.

Produced by Oklahoma State University Cooperative Extension Service in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1992

Name \_\_\_\_\_

### A Change of Season

Draw a line from the picture to the seasonal word it represents. Color the pictures.

	Fall
	Summer
	Winter
	Spring

Produced by Oklahoma State University Cooperative Extension Service in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1992

Oklahoma's new activity  
book for primary school  
students helps teachers  
reach even the youngest  
children with information  
about agriculture.

See **Materials**, page 7

## Editors's Note

*In this issue of Notes you will find a story about Rhoda Gilbert, P.S. 214, Queens, New York. Rhoda talked to me at the New England/New York Ag in the Classroom Consortium meeting in New Hampshire. She said that she has been trying to find a source to donate some full-size tools for her students to use in their school garden. When they go outside to work, with approximately 100 children turning over soil, raking, hoeing, and planting, there is a crying need for more than ten full-size tools (The rest use hand tools). Does anyone know where Rhoda can get some donated full-size hoes and rakes? Give me a call or write to me with your suggestions.*

## New Lesson Plans Introduce Students to the Census of Agriculture

Want to know how many farms of 49 acres or less there were in your state? Interested in finding out the number of females serving as the principal

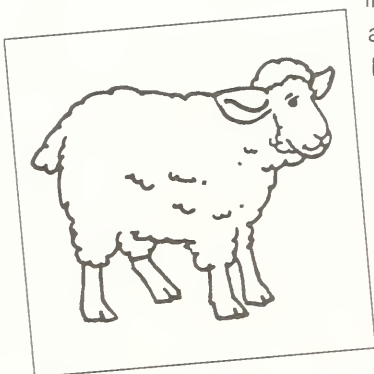
operator of a farm or ranch? Do your students want to know where sunflower seeds come from? All this information—and much more—will soon be available through the 1992 Census of Agriculture.

The census of agriculture, which has been taken periodically since 1840, is

a county-by-county measurement of the nation's agriculture. It is the only source of uniform and comprehensive agricultural data for each state and county.

Beginning this fall, agriculture census information will be released on a state-by-state basis. To help students understand the wealth of information

in the census of agriculture, the Bureau of the Census has released a series of lesson plans that rely on information collected in the 1987 agriculture census.



*Whether you're looking for information on rice production or the number of farms in Georgia, the Census of Agriculture has the answer.*

Table 1 Number of Farms: 1987 and 1982

(For meaning of abbreviations and symbols, see instructions.)

Geographic area	1987	1982	1987	1982	1987	1982	1987	1982
Farms	Farms	Farms	Farms	Farms	Farms	Farms	Farms	Farms
United States	2 087 786	2 246 876	(3)	(3)	185.0	COUNTIES - Con		
STATES						185 leading counties - Con		
25 leading States	1 842 180	1 971 811	(3)	(3)	74.3	Alaska	2 151	2 151
Alaska	186 788	183 020	1	1	8.0	Alabama	2 280	2 280
Arizona	158 102	112 841	2	2	6.7	Alaska	2 280	2 280
California	103 180	115 412	2	2	3.2	Arkansas	2 041	2 041
Colorado	82 432	100 842	2	2	2.8	California	2 041	2 041
Connecticut	65 178	84 382	2	2	2.8	Colorado	2 041	2 041
Delaware	82 917	82 443	2	2	2.8	Connecticut	2 041	2 041
District of Columbia	78 211	80 543	2	2	2.8	Delaware	2 041	2 041
Florida	75 131	82 188	10	10	4.1	District of Columbia	2 041	2 041
Georgia	70 528	77 180	11	11	3.0	Florida	2 041	2 041
Idaho	60 228	72 322	12	12	3.0	Georgia	2 041	2 041
Illinois	80 552	82 543	14	14	3.0	Idaho	2 041	2 041
Indiana	68 542	75 782	12	12	3.0	Illinois	2 041	2 041
Iowa	51 548	55 525	15	15	3.0	Indiana	2 041	2 041
Kansas	51 112	54 881	16	16	3.0	Iowa	2 041	2 041
Kentucky	48 742	50 525	18	18	3.0	Kansas	2 041	2 041
Louisiana	48 742	50 525	18	18	3.0	Kentucky	2 041	2 041
Maine	48 742	50 525	18	18	3.0	Louisiana	2 041	2 041
Maryland	48 742	50 525	18	18	3.0	Maine	2 041	2 041
Massachusetts	48 742	50 525	18	18	3.0	Maryland	2 041	2 041
Michigan	48 742	50 525	18	18	3.0	Massachusetts	2 041	2 041
Minnesota	48 742	50 525	18	18	3.0	Michigan	2 041	2 041
Mississippi	48 742	50 525	18	18	3.0	Minnesota	2 041	2 041
Missouri	48 742	50 525	18	18	3.0	Mississippi	2 041	2 041
Montana	48 742	50 525	18	18	3.0	Missouri	2 041	2 041
Nebraska	48 742	50 525	18	18	3.0	Montana	2 041	2 041
Nevada	48 742	50 525	18	18	3.0	Nebraska	2 041	2 041
New Hampshire	48 742	50 525	18	18	3.0	Nevada	2 041	2 041
New Jersey	48 742	50 525	18	18	3.0	New Hampshire	2 041	2 041
New Mexico	48 742	50 525	18	18	3.0	New Jersey	2 041	2 041
New York	48 742	50 525	18	18	3.0	New Mexico	2 041	2 041
North Carolina	48 742	50 525	18	18	3.0	New York	2 041	2 041
North Dakota	48 742	50 525	18	18	3.0	North Carolina	2 041	2 041
Ohio	48 742	50 525	18	18	3.0	North Dakota	2 041	2 041
Oklahoma	48 742	50 525	18	18	3.0	Ohio	2 041	2 041
Oregon	48 742	50 525	18	18	3.0	Oklahoma	2 041	2 041
Pennsylvania	48 742	50 525	18	18	3.0	Oregon	2 041	2 041
Rhode Island	48 742	50 525	18	18	3.0	Pennsylvania	2 041	2 041
South Carolina	48 742	50 525	18	18	3.0	Rhode Island	2 041	2 041
South Dakota	48 742	50 525	18	18	3.0	South Carolina	2 041	2 041
Tennessee	48 742	50 525	18	18	3.0	South Dakota	2 041	2 041
Texas	48 742	50 525	18	18	3.0	Tennessee	2 041	2 041
Utah	48 742	50 525	18	18	3.0	Texas	2 041	2 041
Vermont	48 742	50 525	18	18	3.0	Utah	2 041	2 041
Virginia	48 742	50 525	18	18	3.0	Vermont	2 041	2 041
Washington	48 742	50 525	18	18	3.0	Virginia	2 041	2 041
West Virginia	48 742	50 525	18	18	3.0	Washington	2 041	2 041
Wisconsin	48 742	50 525	18	18	3.0	West Virginia	2 041	2 041
Wyoming	48 742	50 525	18	18	3.0	Wisconsin	2 041	2 041
						Wyoming	2 041	2 041

Appendix 10

1992 Census of Agriculture

The six lesson plans, designed for students in kindergarten through grade 12, help students understand what the agriculture census does, how it is conducted, and the information it includes. Additional activities can be incorporated into language arts and mathematics classes for students in grades 7 through 12.

In the census, you will find information on many subjects, including: use of agricultural land; crops; acres harvested; farm machinery and equipment; farm-related income; value of sales; production expenses; and livestock and poultry by inventories and sales.

See *Census*, page 7



# Spotlight

## Gilbert is Named Teacher of the Year

When third grade teacher Rhoda Gilbert learned she had been nominated as New York state's Teacher of the Year for Agriculture, she says she felt "honored." But after filling out the application, she "didn't think any more about it. After all, there are many teachers in New York who are doing exciting things with agriculture in their classrooms."

Gilbert certainly never thought she'd be named Teacher of the Year for the entire New England/New York Consortium for Ag in the Classroom. But, say those who have watched her work over the years, she may have been the *only* person who didn't think so. Gilbert's garden at P.S. 214 in Queens, and her commitment to incorporating agriculture into her students' curriculum, have helped convince hundreds of students in the nation's largest city that agriculture is a critical part of their lives.

Gilbert believes in learning by doing. Each year, she and her students plant a garden on the school grounds. "We've planted cauliflower, kale, red and green cabbage, radishes, potatoes, and carrots, among other crops," Gilbert says. Over 100

children come once a week during their lunch hour to keep the garden growing. "We all work together," she adds.

But the learning doesn't stop there. Gilbert invites lecturers to help students learn more about the science of agriculture. "These grade schoolers have learned about DNA, and why a radish has to be a radish and a tomato a tomato." Although Gilbert's school houses a magnet program for gifted students, these activities are open to all students. "The garden is one way to help all children work together and get to know each other," she says.

In her classroom, Gilbert also finds ways to incorporate agriculture into everything she teaches. The whole language approach makes incorporating agriculture even easier. "As we learn about a particular subject, the children can write stories, poems, or their own books about the topic," she says.

This year, Gilbert's students developed a showcase about agriculture. "They learned that agriculture involves technology, computers, and much more than they ever imagined," she says.

## Poems About Agriculture

*These poems were written by Rhoda Gilbert's third grade students.*

### Looking At A Flower

From a human's point of view,  
What do you see?  
A pretty, beautiful, flower.

From a bird's point of view,  
What do you see?  
A delicious treat.

From a frog's point of view,  
What do you see?  
A resting stool.

From a bee's point of view,  
What do you see?  
A sweet provider of nectar.

Let's look at it this way,  
There are many ways  
To look at a flower.

—Jodi Sussman

### Agriculture Haiku

Agriculture is fun.  
Agriculture helps the world.  
It helps everyone!

—Eric Schirmer

### Agriculture

Learn about agriculture  
watching green leaves grow  
Rabbits in a hutch  
Interesting new technology  
cats going to a vet  
Growing eucalyptus plants  
raising little animals  
taking care of animals  
developing unusual vegetables  
horticulturist raising roses  
earthworms in soil

—Gina Kang

## Poster Traces the History of Agriculture

George Washington first suggested establishing a National Board of Agriculture in 1796. By 1815, cotton was replacing tobacco as the chief southern cash crop. In the 1870s, silos came into widespread use. These and other interesting facts are included in an eye-catching poster, "A History of American Agriculture 1776-1990," that traces the scope of U.S. agricultural history for more than two centuries.

Developed by USDA's Economic

Research Service, the poster is an update of information originally compiled during the Bicentennial. Dennis Roth, the writer for the project, says, "It took several years to compile and categorize the information. We wanted to show the relationship between agriculture and other important historical events in our nation."

The large (44" x 50") poster traces the history of agriculture in several categories: economic cycles; farm economy; farmers and the land; farm machinery and technology; crops and livestock; transportation; agricultural trade and development; life on the farm; farm organizations and movements; agricultural education and extension; and government programs and policy.

The poster also includes graphs, photographs, and other visuals that help make agricultural history come alive. For

example, through charts on the poster, students can see that although farm exports have risen from 17.25 million in the early 1800s to more than \$1.3 billion today, the percentage of total exports has dropped from 75 percent to 22.9 percent.

Original photographs, many from the National Agricultural Library and the Library of Congress, show everything from a prairie homestead to today's highly technological agriculture.

The poster is ideal for a bulletin board. It could also be the springboard for creative and interesting activities in history, mathematics, and language arts. In fact, according to Roth, teachers are among the primary audiences of the poster.

The History of Agriculture poster is available for \$16.00 by calling 1-800-999-6779 (Ask for POST11).

### Total population and farm laborers

43% farmers

62,941,714 population

Through graphs, original photographs, and text, the "History of American Agriculture" poster brings the past to life.

#### 1890

Minnesota, California, and Illinois were the chief wheat States

#### 1890

Babcock butterfat test devised

#### 1892

Boll weevil crossed the Rio Grande and began to spread north and east

#### 1892

Eradication of pleuropneumonia

#### 1899

Improved method of anthrax inoculation





## Iowa Kids Love to Learn More About Iowa Foods

One of the best ways to learn about food is to eat it. So as part of a new activity packet, "Iowa Kids Love Iowa Foods," teachers and school foodservice directors worked together. After students learned about Iowa food products in their classrooms, they "then had an opportunity to enjoy those same foods as part of their school lunch," reports Barbara Lykins of the Iowa Farm Bureau Federation, whose Committee for Ag Image and Promotion developed the teaching kit.

Many Iowa schools used the activity packet during March, which combines National Nutrition Month and Ag Week. Elementary school teachers encouraged their students to become food detectives, searching for Iowa foods on their cupboard shelves at home. They studied important facts about Iowa agriculture, the state's number one industry. They learned how foods produced in the state fit into a healthy diet, and how important Iowa products are to the rest of the world.

The kit also included recipes so school foodservice directors could feature the state's food products in special meals throughout the week. "We wanted to bring school foodservice directors into closer contact with teachers," says Lykins. Many foodservice directors reported that the "Iowa Kids Love Iowa Foods" activities helped them feel like an important part of the instructional team.

Parents, too, were involved in learning more about Iowa agriculture. The teaching kit included a reproducible fact sheet that schools could send home to help parents understand more about this important industry. It also included some recipes featuring Iowa foods that parents could enjoy at home with their children.

After visiting some of the schools who had used the teaching kit, Lykins discovered that there is still more work to do in educating students about Iowa foods. "One girl told me that she loved eating sweet corn," Lykins says, "but she wished the farmers wouldn't spice it so much!"

### "Iowa Kids Love Iowa Foods"









#### PACKET CONTENTS

<b>General</b>	
Fact Sheet	(G-1)
Program Objectives	(G-2)
<b>Foodservice</b>	
Foodservice Director Guide	(FS-3)
School Administrator Letter	(FS-4)
Promotional News Release	(FS-5)
Suggested Foodservice Activities	(FS-6)
<b>Classroom</b>	
Classroom Teacher Letter	(CL-7)
Parent Take-Home Letter	(CL-8)
Suggested Classroom Activities	(CL-9)
<b>Activities</b>	
Iowa Activity	(A-10)
Animals & Plants Activity	(A-11)
Language Activity	(A-12)
Food Detective Activity	(A-13)
<b>Handouts</b>	
Agriculture	(H-14)
Home Kitchen	(H-15)
What's Agricultural IQ?	(H-16)
<b>Supplemental</b>	
Form	(S-17)
Organizations	(S-18)
Activities	(S-19)
Not numbered	Not numbered
Not numbered	Not numbered

#### What is "Iowa Kids Love Iowa Foods"?

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Agriculture is Iowa's number one industry. The "Iowa Kids Love Iowa Foods" project was developed by Iowa agricultural organizations to show us how the foods produced in Iowa fit into a healthy diet and how important Iowa's products are to the world. It is also teaching us how our school lunch program uses Iowa food products to help meet our daily nutritional needs. The project includes classroom activities, lunchroom activities and special activities I hope you will enjoy helping me with at home.

<p>Iowa produces approximately 3 billion eggs each year — enough eggs to make 15 billion two-egg omelets.</p> 	<p>Iowa has more sheep farms than any other state.</p> <p>One sheep produces enough wool for two sweaters.</p> 	<p>Iowa raises approximately 350 million bushels of soybeans each year.</p> <p>Soybeans are used in food, ink, paint, soap and medicine.</p> 
<p>There are about 4.5 million cattle and calves on Iowa farms.</p> <p>The average American eats about 29 pounds of ground beef a year — that's about 114 quarter-pounders.</p> 	<p>In the U.S., Iowa is . . .</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1st in corn production</li> <li>1st in pork production</li> <li>2nd in soybean production</li> <li>5th in cattle production</li> <li>8th in egg production</li> <li>9th in turkey production</li> <li>9th in milk production</li> <li>11th in sheep production</li> </ul>	<p>Iowa raises almost 24 million hogs each year.</p> <p>A 220-pound hog provides 122 pounds of meat.</p> 
<p>Iowa raises approximately 8,700,000 turkeys each year.</p> <p>The average American eats 19.5 pounds of turkey per year.</p> 	<p>Iowa produces approximately 1.5 billion bushels of corn a year.</p> <p>Over 75% of all food items in the grocery store contain corn products.</p> 	<p>Veal is a lean and nutritious meat.</p> <p>The average Iowa dairy cow produces 1,581 gallons of milk a year — that's 4 gallons of milk a day!</p> 

CL-9

Besides learning important facts about Iowa agriculture, the "Iowa Kids Love Iowa Foods" teaching package gave students an opportunity to enjoy Iowa foods in their school cafeteria.



## Wyoming Students Visit the Farm Without Leaving Town

How do you explain wool production to a child who has never seen (or petted) a sheep? How can students understand dairy farming if they've never watched someone milk a cow? Teachers understand that to make their classroom lessons real, they need to provide students with concrete learning experiences. This year, Wyoming's Ag in the Classroom program helped with a day-long Farm Expo for hundreds of grade school students.

"In recent years, teachers have had to stretch their imaginations and empty their files looking for ways to

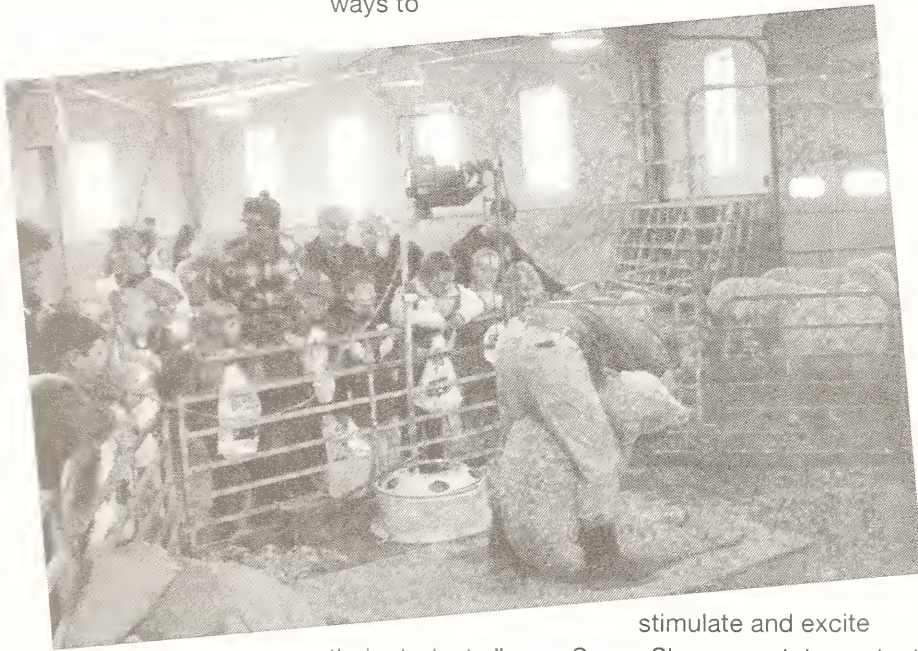
watched wool and wool fiber become familiar finished products.

At one exhibit, each student held a small feeder pig while Extension swine specialist Tom Heald explained what food and other products come from pigs. At another station, the members of the Wyoming Fiber Guild showed how to make felt out of wool while each student took a turn at spinning wool into yarn.

A representative of the Dairy Council explained the dairy industry while students enjoyed a glass of milk. With the help of an Extension forestry specialist, students started their own trees for planting on Arbor Day.

The Casper Expo was so successful that a second Farm Expo was held in Cheyenne in May. The format remained the same, but all livestock displays were staffed by Junior 4-H members, who showed their animals. "The students had the experience of seeing the animals, and the Junior 4-H'ers got great leadership experience," Sherman says.

Each participating teacher received activities and resource materials so they could continue to bring agricultural activities into their classrooms. "The day-long visit helped students learn about America's food basket and the farmers and ranchers who keep it over-filled," Sherman says. "Even more important, the children got a glimpse of issues and challenges ahead for America's food producers . . . while they were having a fun day."



stimulate and excite their students," says Susan Sherman, state contact for AITC in Wyoming. The Casper Farm Expo was designed to recreate an indoor farmyard so that students could experience the sights, sounds, and smells of the farm.

As students arrived on school buses, they were met by FFA students from a local high school. "We wanted to keep the groups small so that every child could have a hands-on experience," Sherman says. Throughout the day, students saw (and touched) farm animals, tasted farm produce, and



*Shearing a sheep and holding a pig were two of the favorite activities of Wyoming's Farm Expo.*





# Ag in the Classroom---State Contacts

The individuals listed here are key reference persons in each state. If you have any questions, want to make reports, or need more information about your state's Ag in the Classroom program, contact the following:

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